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Sharpest microscope tip lands researcher a world record

Michael Brown

A very tiny, very sharp object has put Canadian researchers at the National Institute for Nanotechnology and the University of Alberta into the Guinness Book of World Records.



Robert Wolkow

The team, made up of Robert Wolkow, NINT principal investigator, and physics professor Jason Pitters, research council officer at NINT and Mohamed Rezeg, formerly of NINT, created a tip used in electron microscopes that is just one atom wide at its end point.

Wolkow says the tip is like a light bulb, but it emits electrons, or ions, instead of light. A source of electrons, used in a scanning electron microscope, can be used to illuminate everything from cells to semiconductor chips, while a scanning ion microscope will be able to greatly clarify samples that are too small to generate much useful information.

"Those imaging advantages come about because our new source of ions is really, really small. It is like we have a light bulb the size of one atom," said Wolkow. "And, it turns out that an ion beam emanating from a single atom has great advantages in terms of image resolution and depth of field and contrast."

"We did not start out to set a world record; we were trying to make a better tool for our research," said Wolkow. "Having a world record is a fun achievement, but we are really interested in commercializing this product."

Continued on page 2

Full house for Festival of Teaching open house



Michael Holy

Earth and atmospheric sciences lecturer Solly Balzer lectures her EAS 201 class in the Dentistry/Pharmacy Building March 10. Balzer joined dozens of University of Alberta instructors who opened up their classrooms to fellow teachers as part of the Festival of Teaching, which ran from March 7 to 10.

3M winners get satisfaction from students' learning

Raquel Maurier & Scott Rollans

The Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education names no more than 10 3M Fellows each year across Canada, but this year the University of Alberta can lay claim to two of the coveted awards.

The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry's Scott North and Billy Strean in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation have been recognized for their dedication to providing a superior learning experience for students in their classes.

"On behalf of the University of Alberta, I congratulate Scott North and Billy Strean on receiving this well-deserved honour," said Carl Amrhein, provost and vice-president (academic). "These two professors are outstanding teachers and are tremendous examples of commitment to educational leadership and higher learning."

North is being recognized for his inspirational teaching of second-year medical students. Each year, North teaches a four-week block on oncology in the spring. The course introduces medical students to the general principles of cancer, how to diagnose cancer, what symptoms to watch for and some ideas on how to come up with a treatment strategy for their patients.



Scott North

Instead of giving students experience with just paper-based cases, North brings in an alternative-medicine practitioner or a patient using alternative therapies. In one instance, a patient dying of cancer came in with his wife to talk to the students about their grieving process. Actors also visit the class to act out different scenarios as patients with varying types of cancer-like symptoms. In one exercise, North has the students practise what it's like to break bad news to patients who have been told they have terminal cancer.

North says the best part of teach-

"These two professors are outstanding teachers and are tremendous examples of commitment to educational leadership and higher learning."

Carl Amrhein

ing is the satisfaction he gets when students have that "ah-ha" moment while studying difficult concepts. As a practising oncologist, he says, "teaching is that foil for the bad days when nothing is going well, and your favourite patient has been told the worst news you could imagine. Teaching gives you that outlet where you can have a lot of fun with the students and empower them with their learning."

"Part of my teaching philosophy I've articulated as a tree analogy. If I can provide them with the branches, they'll put all the leaves on. And leaves are transient. The details will come and go and change, but if you teach people frameworks, then they can

continually update so the tree will self-renew."



Billy Strean

North says his win is really a team win. He says he works with a great group and has had wonderful mentorship over the years. He also appreciates the faculty culture where teaching excellence is strongly encouraged.

Fraser Brenneis, vice-dean for the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, nominated North for the award and was pleased about his win.

"Dr. North is an exceptionally good teacher of cancer education for our learners and an advocate for cancer care," said Brenneis.

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Meet at Alumni House



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Grant to shine light on how the brain controls breathing

Raquel Maurier

Edmonton researchers with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry have received a grant to use a high-tech technique called "optogenetics" to study how the brain controls breathing. What they learn could one day help premature infants, or "preemies."

Using a combination of optical and genetic techniques, the researchers turn on and off different types of brain cells responsible for breathing by simply shining a light on them. The research could one day lead to better treatments for premature babies, who are often born with breathing difficulties, and for patients with other

breathing disorders involving the brain.

Selected as the research method of the year by the journal *Nature Methods* in 2010, it is the current "craze" in neuroscience research. For

example, this technique is being used in lab models of spinal-cord injury to activate nerve cells, which drive certain muscles when the brain has lost this ability due to irreparable spinal cord damage.

Neuroscientist Greg Funk, who works in the faculty's Department of Physiology, received a five-year, \$778,000 grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to conduct his research. Funk and his team, which includes grad students Jennifer Zwicker and Vishaal Rajani and

technician Tuca Alvares, will use different wavelengths of light via fibre-optic tools to shine light on different regions of the brain—all in an effort to better understand how the brain controls breathing rhythms.

The U of A researchers will also collaborate with two overseas researchers; Alex Gourine from University College London, and Sergey Kasparov from the University of Bristol. Kasparov is a viral geneticist who makes the optogenetics tools that target astrocytes, a type of brain cell.

Working with lab models, Kasparov and Gourine have shown that astrocytes are key detectors of carbon dioxide levels that signal the brain to increase breathing. Funk, along with Zwicker, are heading to England this spring to learn how to use the tools. They will then develop an optogenetics lab back at the U of A to study astrocytes in the regions of the brain responsible for breathing rhythms.

“Ultimately, this research could lead to new treatments for preemie babies with breathing difficulties.”

Greg Funk

Specifically, they want to look at triggers that cause increased breathing in low-oxygen situations. They will then inject the brain with viral DNA that has been genetically modified to respond to light. The viral DNA infects the brain cells they are studying, thus allowing the researchers to switch these brain cells on and off with light.

“Ultimately, this research could lead to new treatments for preemie babies with breathing difficulties,” says Funk. ■



Greg Funk

Better grades tell the story of commitment to teaching

Richard Cairney

As the University of Alberta tipped its hat to teachers during this past week's Festival of Teaching, materials engineering professor Suzanne Kresta was happy to open her classroom doors to other professors from across campus.

“Students taking this class used to come to me and say ‘I worked on the problem until two in the morning and I can’t even get started.’ That was just unacceptable to me. I said, ‘I think we can teach this better.’”

Suzanne Kresta

Kresta is one of those professors who know there's always a better way of teaching and is continually fine tuning her techniques so students leave class confident they've got a grasp on an important new concept.

And she gets results. Kresta has taken a mass and energy balances course that once stymied and frustrated students, and has systematically overhauled it, bit by bit, semester by semester, to a point where average grades have risen by 13 per cent—even as the number of students in the course grew from 56 to 98.

“I've been teaching this course for ages but the cool story is that when I started, about 30 per cent of the class totally didn't get it,” she said. “Students taking this class used to come to me and say, ‘I worked on the problem until two in the morning and I can't even get started.’ That was just unacceptable to me. I said, ‘I think we can teach this better.’”

“So we started looking at where students were getting stuck and we changed some teaching methods, targeting where the learning fell apart. And their performance is up 13 per cent. We are getting content mastery from a lot more students and the standards are coming up.”

Kresta makes it a point to “get into the trenches” with her students, attending labs and providing one-on-one assistance whenever she can. It helps the students understand material better, and it gives Kresta insights about her own teaching effectiveness.

When she discovered that students were struggling with terminology, for example, Kresta made the first assignment in the course one that familiarizes them with the language used in the course. She also updated the curriculum by bringing tables used as industry standards into the course—the information wasn't in textbooks.

In her drive to make sure students get the most out of a course, Kresta has gone so far as to look at textbooks used to teach the same concepts in the early and mid-20th century.

“I want to know what are the other ways of explaining this stuff. Learning about the thinking of a discipline makes you understand the discipline better, and sometimes you can go back and pick up a piece of really good information.”

Kresta also works with professors to help improve teaching effectiveness, by joining in “teaching triads,” where professors critique one another's class, and by taking part in events like the Festival of Teaching.

Kresta wasn't exactly “lured” into teaching. It was more a matter of being “persuaded” during her undergraduate years at the University of New Brunswick.

“When I first got into it, it was because we desperately needed women in engineering and I got leaned on by the president of the university, the vice-president academic, the dean and

Festival of Teaching

department chair and all of my professors, to become an academic. There was a little bit of pressure,” she said.

So she tried it—even wrangling herself a teaching assistant position in her fourth year of university—a position typically reserved for graduate students.

“I decided it was absolutely the right thing for me then, and I still do it now because I love it. I love seeing students grow, I love seeing them change and really learn how to think,” she said. “I want to teach courses where students get transformed and their problem-solving skills take a big jump.” ■

Sharpest object honoured with world record

continued from page 1

“Unlike some world records, the atomic sharpness of the tip means that the record can't ever be broken—one can't get sharper.”

Robert Wolkow

Wolkow says the NINT nanotip looks like an ordinary needle, unless you look closer trying to see the very end of it. He explains that with ever-more powerful microscopes, you would eventually find that the point terminates in a single atom that stands above all the others.

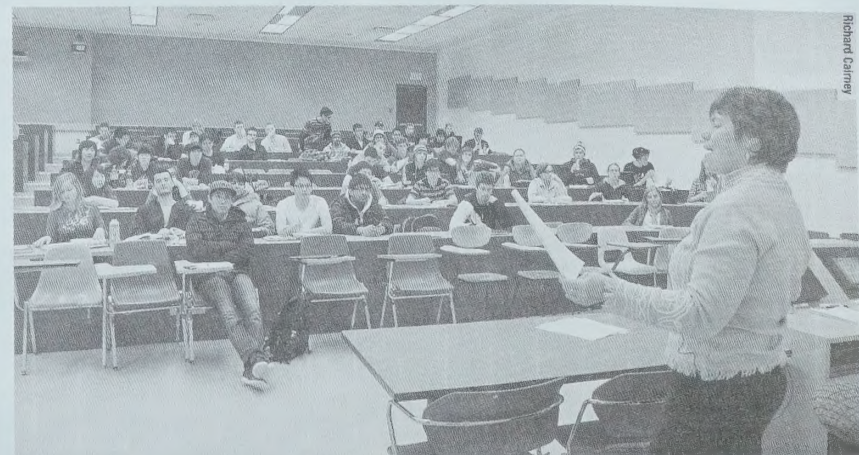
“An ordinary needle would look more like a very rough blob—with a relatively huge overall radius of curvature—composed of many uncountable atoms,” he said. “You might imagine dumping a big box full of Lego blocks to form an amorphous pile, and contrast that with a perfect pyramid of blocks—carefully assembled and stacked to form a point with only one little block at the top.”

The tip is made of tungsten and fabricated using a patented controlled etching method. It is currently being evaluated for potential uses.

Wolkow says the same tip is now the source in a new holographic electron microscope built over the last couple of years at NINT. “We think it will reveal features of molecules and other nano-entities that can't be observed in any other kind of microscope,” he said.

And although a world record was the last thing on the minds of the research team, Wolkow says he takes a bit of pride knowing that the record is here to stay.

“Unlike some world records, the atomic sharpness of the tip means that the record can't ever be broken—one can't get sharper,” he said. ■



Suzanne Kresta leads engineering students through her mass and energy balances course.

3m winners

continued from page 1

"This award is a well-deserved acknowledgement of his tireless efforts and his skills in these domains."

Strean is the first University of Alberta physical education and recreation instructor to receive the award in its 25-year history. "It's a huge thrill to be named to the fellowship. I am excited to join such an amazing group of people for whom I have so much respect," said Strean. As a popular instructor in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation with a focus on "learner-centred teaching," Strean builds a connection with his students at the most basic level—by learning their names. "That's a big way of grabbing people's attention," he says. "In a class of 36, within the first five minutes I'll know their names."

As a 3M fellow, Strean looks forward to contributing his own voice to the society's ongoing efforts to promote teaching in higher education. More than that, though, he looks forward to learning from his peers.

"The more one learns, the more one realizes the size of one's ignorance," Strean said. "It's that feeling of, 'Gee, I think I'm just starting to get this right.' There's always more to learn; there are always different ways to develop."

The pace of change presents teachers with a daunting challenge, says Strean. "The whole idea of a lecture makes sense if you've got the only book in town. But, information—the kind that can be read in a textbook or on a website—is absolutely not a rare commodity anymore. And, to the extent to which we treat it like that, we're shortchanging what's possible when you have a bunch of people who are alive and in a room together."

The 3M Teaching Fellowship recognizes exceptional achievements and contributions by teacher scholars across Canada. The University of Alberta currently has more 3M winners than any other post-secondary institution in the country with a total of 34. This is the second time since 2009 that the U of A has had two winners in the same year.

In June, North and Strean will attend a conference in Saskatoon where they will officially receive their 3M awards. ■

Volunteer-driven HIV treatments prove successful for Uganda

Geoff McMaster

Walter Kipp always knew his hypothesis would bear fruit. Now he has the hard data to prove that using a volunteer team to administer antiretroviral drugs to HIV patients in rural Uganda works as well as, or even better than, hospital treatment.

Four years into his research project in the small town of Rwimi in Western Uganda, and having monitored the treatment of 400 patients both at home and in the district hospital, the U of A public-health scientist and his team can claim victory. The next stage, aided with \$280,000 from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, will be to hand the program over to local health services.

"We were worried about the access of life-saving antiretroviral therapies for HIV patients, because they cannot afford to go to the urban hospitals where the treatment is available," said Kipp. "Transport costs have shown to be the biggest barrier to treatment."

"So we decided on community-based intervention and hypothesized that this therapy, which is a bit more complicated than giving an Aspirin, should none-

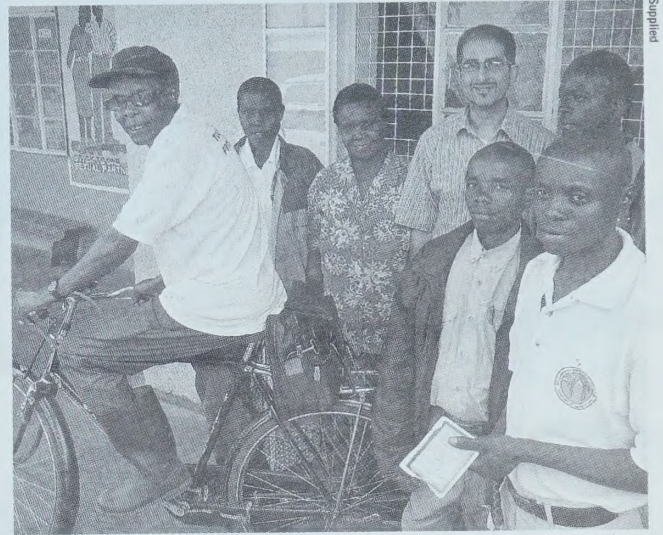
theless be possible with the help of a health-care facility to provide to people in their homes."

A team of volunteers were given a two-day training session, after which they would administer and monitor the drugs to HIV patients. If problems arose, the volunteers would help get patients either to a local referral centre or to the nearest hospital.

"The district government is really happy about it, and they want to expand it to the whole district, but they have to see how it goes at the local level first," said Kipp. Similar programs have been shown to work in other parts of Africa.

Kipp's team will now conduct more training seminars, set up some rules and guidelines and then let the Ugandans run the treatment program themselves. "Hopefully in three years we'll see that the local authorities can do it, because there is a difference between research programs and local services."

Kipp estimates his treatment program may have helped prevent 800 to 1,000 children from becoming orphaned, a significant result given the prevalence of child-led households created by the African AIDS scourge. He says his most profound satisfactions has



Arif Alibhai (fourth from left), research associate of the community-based ARV Project with local volunteers in Rwimi, Uganda.

been witnessing the hope the program has brought to the region.

"When you see the poverty there, you can't find the words. People are completely paralyzed." But as something like this takes on success, he says, "you cannot believe how much ability comes out of people, and they didn't even

know it. People develop talents they had no idea they had. It has been quite a personal thing for me, to recognize how much talent we have in this group. You know, you could cry about it. It's a kind of overall concept of development, which primary health care in the strong sense really means." ■

Prof says food retailers need to step up in battle for consumer's buck

Jamie Hanlon

Alberta School of Business professor Yu Ma says that if grocers want to survive a price jump at the gas pump, they'll have to change their tactics in order to attract shoppers "hungry" for better deals.

Ma and his colleagues say that when the price of gas rises, the monthly grocery bill is the prime target for cuts. The researchers noted that there are two sets of decisions made in the gas-versus-grub dilemma. One deals with location, which Ma says is based on choosing the frequency of shopping visits, and distance to the venue. The second is deciding what to buy and when—in other words, whether to forgo a favourite brand for a no-name substitute or middle-tier replacement item—or to search vigilantly for deals or promotions. Consumers may also elect to purchase at wholesale or warehouse stores, thus choosing to buy bulk products in order to save money.

Ma says wise retailers who recognize the changes in their customers' spending trends, will give the people what they want. Industry inclinations towards opening warehouse clubs and supercen-

tres are not something that companies can resist if they hope to survive.

"You have to start thinking about providing one-stop shopping for consumers; they want to go to one place and buy everything in the same store," said Ma. "You have to provide them with that convenience."

And while the gas-and-groceries concept has been around for some time, Ma notes that more retail grocers are using their own gas stations on site as a shopping incentive for customers. By offering discount fuel or savings incentives from in-store purchases, it is a value-added attraction for customers to frequent the stores, even if they may be a little further out of the way.

Gone also, he says, should be the idea of retailers putting only single items on sale. Consumers will less likely be attracted to a store for one item in the expensive gas environment. Savvy grocers will have to come up with novel incentives, such as offering a basket of goods at a reasonable price, as a viable means of attracting consumers, says Ma.

"If grocery retailers can offer a promotion or a pricing strategy that fits the customer's objectives, if they tailor

their promotional message to consumers based on how they can save money, it would be much more effective than some blind promotion," he said.

Retailers are not the only ones who will feel the effect of shifting loyalties in the wake of the groceries-versus-gas struggle. Manufacturers also need to find a way to become more competitive without cannibalizing their own brands, says Ma. He cites the example of top-tier

brands offering lower-cost, brand-name alternatives to lower priced no-name brands, introduced briefly during the recent economic downturn, as a way to entice consumers. Scaling back a product's price means that the quality is also scaled back, says Ma. But he warns that consumers still want their money's worth, especially when filling the family car with gas is drawing directly from the grocery budget. ■

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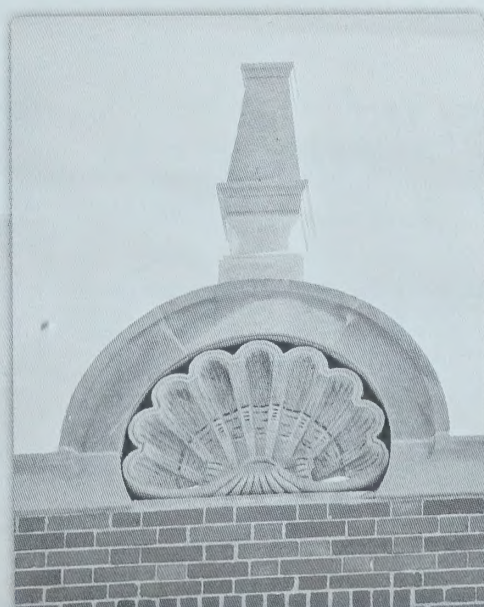


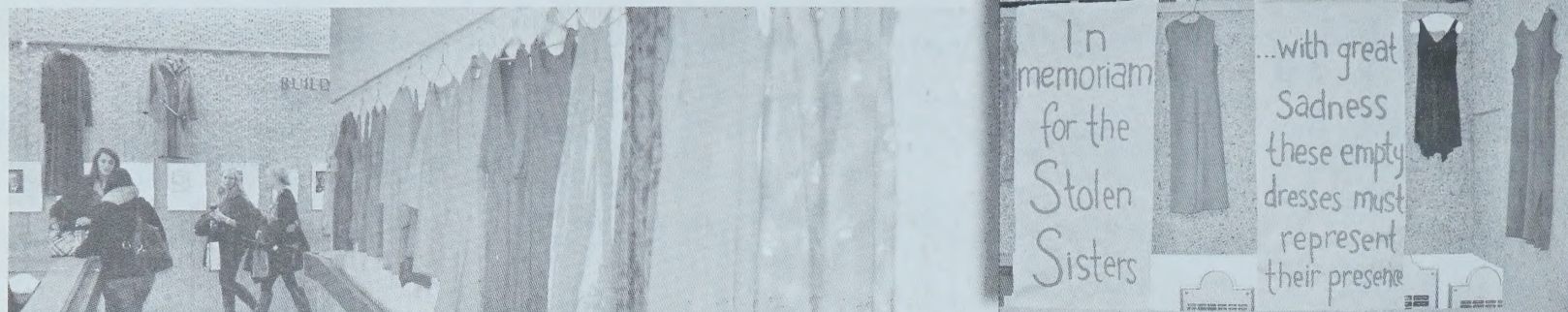
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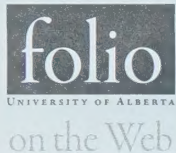
Congratulations to Bob Barton, whose name was drawn as part of folio's Feb. 25 "Are You a Winner?" contest. Barton correctly identified the photo in question as Sculpture (Greek) by fine-arts professor Peter Hide, which is located south of the Timms Centre. For his keen eye, Barton has won the last of this round of Butterdome butter dishes.

Up for grabs this week is a copy of "City of Love & Revolution: Vancouver in the Sixties" by U of A history professor Lawrence Aronsen. To win, simply email your correct answer to folio@exr.ualberta.ca by noon on Friday, March 18, and you will be entered into the draw.





The Aboriginal Law Students' Association held a Red Dress initiative on the second floor of the Law Building this week in memory of missing Aboriginal women, or Stolen Sisters.



www.ualberta.ca/folio/

Public Hearing

Members of the University community are invited to offer comments about University of Alberta Protective Services as part of an accreditation process (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc)

Monday, March 21, 2011 at noon

Prairie Room, University of Alberta Conference Centre
87 Avenue and 116 Street, Edmonton
Comments can also be submitted by phone by calling 780-492-1457 between 9–11:30 a.m. March 21.

For further information, contact
University of Alberta Protective Services:
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or Sgt. Grace Berry at 780-492-5957



The university responds to the province's budget

Carl Amrhein, provost and vice-president (academic)

As you undoubtedly know, the Alberta government recently tabled the provincial budget in the legislature. The good news for the University of Alberta is that there are no surprises. The zero per cent increase to our Campus Alberta Grant for 2011–12, as announced in the budget, was what the government told us to expect, and thus, is what we have been preparing for with the university's budget. Unfortunately, the zero per cent will result in an actual decrease of at least two per cent across the academy because there is no allowance for inflation or other cost growth.



Carl Amrhein

I want to take this opportunity to go over the specific aspects of the provincial budget that are salient for the university and outline any particular implications for the U of A.

Here are the budget highlights as they affect the university:

Lights-On Funding

The province confirmed lights-on funding for the Edmonton Clinic Health Academy and for the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science at \$9.8 million base, with an additional \$2.2 million in soft funding (which will eventually be rolled into base). This provides us with funding as originally agreed to by the province when the decision to go ahead with both projects was made. This is particularly good news as we are now able to proceed with our scheduled occupancy plans for both of these important projects.

AHFMR Transition

The government, via Alberta Innovates, is providing \$118 million over eight years for AHFMR transition funding. We will be communicating a great deal more about this, certainly to those affected by the changes. Over the eight years, the university will work toward securing an agreement for base funding on the positions affected by the AHFMR changes. The \$118 million is directed funding to be used only for AHFMR transition.

Infrastructure Maintenance Funding

We received a small increase of \$1 million in infrastructure maintenance funding for a total of \$22 million for 2011–12. This funding, too, can only be used for its allotted purpose.

\$20 million for Post-Secondary Sector

The budget makes available to the province's entire post-secondary education sector \$20 million in order to relieve enrolment pressures. The university was informed by the government that these funds will not be distributed until the fall and the monies will be allocated to all post-secondary institutions in Alberta. The intent of the funding is to relieve some of the pressure we are facing with our current unfunded students.

\$5 million Campus Alberta Allocation

The U of A is developing an IT-related proposal and will submit it for consideration for funding from this \$5-million funding pool.

Recruitment and Retention Allocation

The budget allocated another \$6 million to be dispersed among the four universities in the province to be used for recruiting and retaining faculty. The universities' presidents will work directly with the provincial government and the Alberta Innovates councils to determine how the funding will be most effectively spent. It is our understanding that there are specific spending limitations tied to this funding.

Access to the Future Fund

While indicating it remains strongly committed to the Access to the Future Fund, the government has suspended fund payments for the next two years. The University of Alberta has more than \$110 million in donations awaiting matching monies from the fund and stopped accepting donations with a matching option almost two years ago. We are working with the deans to develop mitigation strategies and will be communicating with our donors about how the fund's temporary suspension may affect their donations.

Fiscal challenges remain for both the province and the university. We appreciate the very difficult financial situation the province is navigating. And we believe the province is sincere in its commitment to post-secondary education in the province—Advanced Education and Technology was, for example, one of just three ministries without budget cuts, and our minister was able to fulfil all commitments. We will continue to meet with government and make the case that we need a minimum of four per cent increases in future years, along with additional, targeted funding if we are to meet our commitments to providing excellence in research, teaching and learning.

When we know what the specific implications are to the deans' and vice-presidents' budgets, we will communicate that to the university community. ■



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A University of Alberta professor's take on economy and environment is grabbing attention in the blogosphere. Andrew Leach, environmental economist, energy enthusiast, and Alberta School of Business faculty member, writes "Rescuing the frog" (<http://andrewleach.ca/>), recently listed in the "Globe and Mail's" roundup of the best economic posts on the Web. His blog "reminds everyone to be careful what they wish for if they think higher oil prices is a sure route to a future full of alternative energy," writes the "Globe." The "frog" alludes to the metaphor of a frog in water that doesn't know it's being heated until it's too late, writes Leach. "I think the metaphor extends beyond climate science and into many of the policy discussions in which I regularly participate. Where does Canada fit into the global discussion on climate change policy?"



Rescuing the frog

A business prof tackles energy, climate, and the Alberta oil sands

About Bookmarks

The strange relationship between environmentalists and the oil price

by Andrew on February 16, 2011

Environmentalists have a very strange relationship with the price of oil. I asked around among friends, students, and online acquaintances and every one replied without question that high oil prices were a good thing if you care about the environment. Why? Well, high prices discourage consumption they said. Not only that, high prices enable alternative energy sources. Of course, both of these statements are correct, but if you look deeper into the economics of oil and gas, it is not so easy to say that you should pray for high oil prices if you care about the environment.

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Killam winner teaches sound theory first

Michael Brown

While it would seem that effective reading would be a critical asset for educational success, some get by using other means.

Educational psychologist Rauno Parrila has spent his career at the U of A exploring those other means, whether he is researching problematic reading development or trying to figure out compensation techniques of high-functioning dyslexics, both outside and inside the classroom.



Rauno Parrila

"I bring research into the classroom every day," said Parrila, who teaches classes on research and on assessment. "Most of my classes are about research-consumption skills; how do we pick research apart? What makes good research? What is evidence? What can we count as evidence?"

Parrila, who is a 2010 recipient of a Killam Professorship, says it is important for him to teach his students to be able to clearly identify ideas that have an evidence base and those that don't.

"In many instances we are looking at research that has yet to be published to see where it fits into the discussion," said Parrila, who is also an editor for *Scientific Studies of Reading*.

Parrila says constant discussion means it is important that his students are equipped with a solid understanding of theory.

"You need a way of looking at things more than you need details," he said.

teaching & learning, learning & teaching

"Details change, details you can find, but if you don't have a way of looking at things, it is all the same—it is all a mess."

Originally from Finland, Parrila decided to pursue his PhD in educational psychology at the U of A in 1992 under the guidance of famed U of A education professor, J.P. Das, after taking in a presentation by Das on his theory of information processing.

Parrila says his initial focus was how students with learning disabilities keep their behaviour on

target at any given moment and manage to complete their daily tasks. From there, Parrila's research drifted toward looking at normal versus problematic reading development.

"What we have been looking at is those information processes—how the brain processes information—that are needed for reading to develop normally and, if reading doesn't develop normally, what processes are not working? What are the underlying reasons for reading problems?" he said.

Parrila says his main contribution is in a specific process named "rapid naming," or the speed at which a child can repetitively name objects or colours, and the importance of rapid naming for developing particular reading fluency.

Although there are several interpretations to why results differ, Parrila says it is probably an indication of the integrity of those narrow networks in the brain that support reading development. "Even before you learn to read, that neural network is there. This task somehow taps into how well that neural network works."

Parrila is working with high-functioning university students with dyslexia who are passing their courses and getting degrees yet still have significant problems in terms of word-reading fluency, or how fast they can recognize words.

"When word recognitions are mostly automatic, a reader can focus on trying to understand the sentence and the paragraph. This is a critical assumption in most theories of reading comprehension," he said. "When you have dyslexia, that automaticity on the word level doesn't develop."

"What we find with university students with dyslexia is that they are not automatic on the word level, but their comprehension is as good as anyone else. No existing theory explains how this is possible and we are trying to figure out what are the compensation methods that they are using." ■

"Details change, details you can find, but if you don't have a way of looking at things, it is all the same—it is all a mess."

Rauno Parrila

Looking at easing immigrants into rural life

Bev Betkowski

Churches, community centres and sports groups in rural Alberta can do a lot to bridge cultural gaps with new immigrants who settle there, say University of Alberta experts.

Interdisciplinary research conducted by a group of U of A scholars outlined challenges that new immigrants and refugees face when arriving in smaller centres, and touched on ways that schools and other cornerstone institutions can help newcomers settle more smoothly into rural life.

"Our focus on the rural areas arose from our understanding that, for immigrant youth moving to rural Alberta, there were often fewer services available to them and less opportunity to integrate into a larger society," said Ingrid Johnston, professor in the Department of Secondary Education.

"The research project wanted to map out how these newcomers were faring," added Andy Knight, professor of political science. "The question is, are they being welcomed? In many cases, they are being marginalized or ostracized because they are from somewhere else, often they have menial jobs, and as a result, a lot of people fall through the cracks."

Knight, Johnston and their U of A colleagues consulted with various community and government agencies and education groups from Red Deer, Lethbridge, Brooks, Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray.

The research project turned up concerns touching on virtually every aspect

of life, including education, socio-cultural, economic and political issues. Specific challenges for immigrants include a mistrust of police, lack of local female doctors for immigrant women, not enough instruction in English as a second language, lack of role models, lack of adequate housing, stress-related health problems, a growing, problematic cultural gap between parents and children, lack of civic commitment from new citizens, cultural misunderstanding in the workplace, and problems finding appropriate employment when professional credentials are not recognized in Canada. Concerns also arise when youths working in the oil industry are paid higher salaries than their parents.

The findings can serve as ways to improve policy for government, front-line social service agencies and school boards when dealing with new immigrants, Knight said. "We hope to draw attention to some of these problems and give some policy options to improve the lives of these individuals."

On a local level, community institutions such as churches and sports organizations can reach out and include newcomers—particularly youth—in their activities, and at the same time, be open to change. "Immigrant youths may know soccer or cricket. They don't know skating or hockey, so they don't feel comfortable joining the team. But, they would gravitate to a community cricket

game in the region," Knight said.

Efforts by the community as a whole to learn from immigrants and accommodate their experiences "will make them more welcome, rather than letting them struggle on their own," Knight added. "The whole notion of integration is really a two-way street. You want a newcomer to embrace your community's values, but you want to learn from the newcomer as well."

Schools can also help improve the immigrant experience, said Johnston. "Teachers are very caring of their students, but they need professional development to be aware of cultural needs of students who don't speak English or French." As well, Johnston said, refugee students may have lots to offer the classroom. "They often come to Canada with tremendously rich life experiences."

"The whole notion of integration is really a two-way street. You want a newcomer to embrace your community's values, but you want to learn from the newcomer as well."

Andy Knight

Simple but effective measures like providing translators for meet-the-parent nights or school events is also important, Johnston said. "Once you encourage the parents to come in, they are interested in their child's education." ■

Review of Director of the University of Alberta's Canadian Circumpolar Institute

The current appointment of Dr. Marianne Douglas, Director of the Canadian Circumpolar Institute, concludes on June 30. Dr. Douglas has indicated she wishes to be considered for another five-year term as Director.

Under the authority of Section 103.4.4 of the University's General Faculties Council Policy Manual, Associate Vice-President (Research) George Pavlich has convened a review committee. One part of the review process is to invite feedback from the University community, and anyone wishing to comment on Dr. Douglas's performance as Director of the Canadian Circumpolar Institute over the last five years is invited to contact Katharine Moore, Review Committee Secretary, by phone at 492-0868 or by email at katharine.moore@ualberta.ca.

Comments should be received by Friday, March 25 at 4:30 p.m.

The records that arise from this review will be managed in accordance with the provisions of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.



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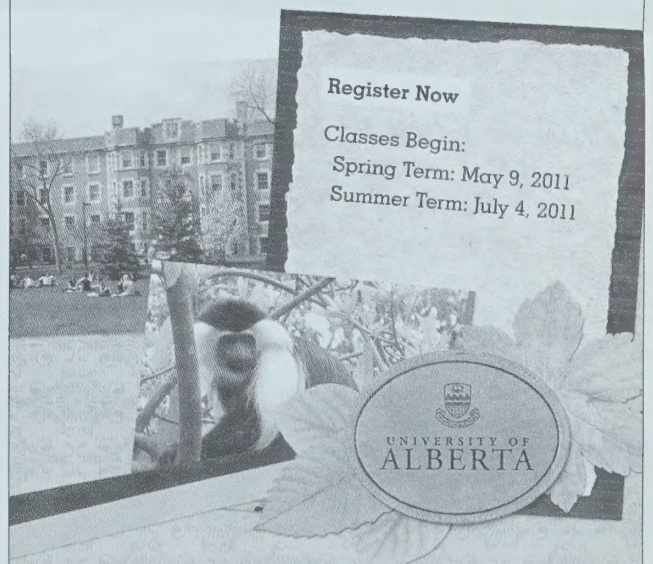
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Prof honoured by Cree

Quinn Phillips

A long-time University of Alberta professor has been given a Cree name in honour of the work he has done for the Plains Cree Aboriginal community.

Earle Waugh, director for the Centre for the Cross Cultural Study of Health and Healing in the Department of Family Medicine, received the Cree name "Pewapiskimostos," which translates to "Iron Bull," at a sweat lodge on Alberta Hospital grounds Jan. 29 in an official ceremony led by fellow faculty member Clifford Cardinal.

Pewapiskimostos comes with a rich history and is a name Waugh says he is very honoured to carry with him. It is the name of a crow chief and warrior who led the River Crow people in Yellowstone Park area.

"It's a really dynamic and powerful name," said Waugh, who added he was told it isn't a Cree name per se, but rather recognition that Waugh is a part of the Plains people. "I'm part of the extended family."

This credit is well deserved. Waugh's work with the Cree community dates back more than 35 years to when he first arrived in Alberta after doing his post-doctoral fellowship in anthropology at the University of Chicago. Waugh, who is also a professor emeritus of divinity in the

Office of Interdisciplinary Studies, was approached by Sister Nancy LeClaire, a well-known nun in the Cree community, to develop a Cree dictionary. The book took 27 years to finish, but is complete and contains all the Cree dialects.

"It's the only book I've ever worked on in my life that sold out in a month," said Waugh.



Earle Waugh

His work with Aboriginal communities continues as just last year Waugh was nominated for an Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association award for an educational video he produced for doctors and Cree people on cross-cultural sensitivities in medicine.

Waugh also helped organize a nationwide healing gathering in October at the U of A, the first since 1933. Waugh says he will now turn his focus to set up a national network for traditional healers to teach and share their knowledge. He adds this is all vitally important work as his faculty looks to continue building a lasting relationship with the Aboriginal community.

"Having this kind of honour symbolically links the medical school with Aboriginal people in a very personal and intimate way," said Waugh. "I'm particularly touched by this because it is not easy to get this kind of recognition."

"I think the support of the faculty has been absolutely essential for it."

Staff award another notch for Buckle

Michael Brown

The only problem with etching Trevor Buckle's name on the plaque given to him during the University of Alberta annual administrative and professional officers recognition awards is figuring out his title.

"I've kind of been around," said Buckle, currently manager of undergraduate student services in the Faculty of Arts, who won the recognition award in late 2010 as international advisor in the faculty, and has held no less than eight positions in his 21 years at the U of A.

"The one unifying thread for all of my jobs, no matter what office I worked in, has always been student service," said Buckle. "The thing I love about being at the university is the student contact."

"I just find the students so invigorating. It's not that I am really that old, but they do keep me young. It is just so fun to come into contact with the students. You find out what their story is and what they are doing. There is just so much of that youthful energy and that vitality, and they're so creative and they're coming from so many different directions."

Perhaps Buckle's ability to tap into the energy of students stems from an unsevered tie dating back to his years as an arts student at the U of A.

"I literally wrote my last exam on a Friday and began work here on a Monday," said Buckle, who began his career as an admissions and records co-ordinator in the Office of the Registrar.

After stops in the faculties of science, engineering and agricultural, life and environmental sciences, as well as an encore in the registrar's offices as assistant registrar, Buckle made his way to the Faculty of Arts.

As international advisor in the faculty, Buckle is responsible for dealing with admission inquiries of incoming international students as well as unforeseen problems that arise in the admission system.

"[Admission processes] may seem to make sense for someone coming from Alberta, but when students are coming from China, it's not straightforward," said Buckle. "I'm there to look at the big picture, to help process admissions, help with transfer-credit issues, and generally just try to help the kids get here all in one piece."

Buckle also looks at retention issues surrounding international students. "It's not enough to get them here; when you get them here you have to look at how they are doing. I work collaboratively with other groups on campus to look at the international experience as a whole. Are we doing enough for them or are we just dropping them off and saying 'good luck.'"

staff spotlight

Colleagues say Buckle is acutely aware that the decisions he makes daily have an impact on students and their lives.

"If policies and procedures interfere, he makes sensible changes, seeking appropriate advice and agreement," wrote one of the people who nominated Buckle for the recognition award. "Trevor is the epitome of a team player. He doesn't think about what he needs as much as about how we can best work within the resources



Trevor Buckle

that we have, yet still meets the needs of students."

Buckle's work ethic and demeanour have been instrumental in his management of the Faculty of Arts School in Cortona, Italy. Buckle's role has also expanded to include management duties in the Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Student Services office, where he will be overseeing big-picture student-service concerns, student inquiries and addressing some of the bigger issues that students face. No matter what his position, however, Buckle says he can't imagine working anywhere but the U of A.

"There are just so many things going on at the U of A," he said. "It's nice to work at a place where you are proud to say you work there. You can't say that about a lot of [places] but I am proud to work at the U of A."

'Weird science' found inside neutron star

Brian Murphy

A University of Alberta astronomer has glimpsed the inner workings of a neutron star and found a world where the physics can only be described as "weird." Craig Heinke's team found the neutron star's core contained a superfluid, a frictionless liquid that could seemingly defy the laws of gravity.

"If you could put some of this superfluid in a jar it would flow up the walls of the container and over the edge," said Heinke.

A neutron star is the extremely dense core left behind from an exploding star, or supernova.

Heinke says the core of the neutron star also contains a superconductor, a perfect electrical conductor. "An electric current in a superconductor never loses energy—it could keep circulating forever."

These discoveries came about when the researchers used NASA's Chandra space satellite telescope to investigate a neutron star known as Cassiopeia A. The star is 11,000 light years from Earth and space observing equipment detected a sudden temperature change on its surface.

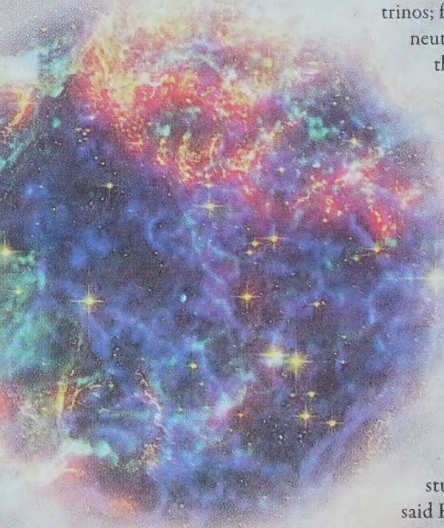
The researchers determined that the neutron star's surface temperature is dropping because its core recently transformed into a superfluid state and is venting off heat in the form of neutrinos, sub-atomic particles that flood the universe. Here on Earth our bodies are constantly bombarded by neutrinos; for example, 100 billion neutrinos passing harmlessly through our eyes every second.

They also found that the neutron star's interior superconductor, affects how the neutron star cools. "This research helps us better understand stars, and the behaviour of matter at levels of density and heat that could never be duplicated and studied here on Earth," said Heinke.

Heinke is a co-author of the research published in February in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astro-*

nomical Society. Heinke says that, because this neutron star was formed just 330 years ago, it offers researchers a great opportunity.

"We've got ringside seats to studying the life cycle of a neutron star, from its collapse to its present cooling-off state."



A neutron star is the extremely dense core left behind from an exploding star, or supernova.

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Book details a time of sex, drugs and rock n' roll in 'Lotus Land'

Michael Davies-Venn

Sex, drugs and rock n' roll were characteristic of the 1960s, when for a brief moment everything, from ending the nuclear arms race to creating a society less mechanistic and materialistic, seemed possible, says the author of the first book that documents that decade's counterculture movement in Vancouver.

University of Alberta history researcher Lawrence Aronsen, who wrote *City of Love and Revolution: Vancouver in the Sixties*, says his research shows how activists in Vancouver welcomed the California counterculture, considered revolutionary at the time, despite rampant anti-American sentiment.

Aronsen says that "the historic fear was that if Canada had closer trade ties with the U.S., eventually that would lead to cultural domination and then that makes it easier for the U.S. to annex us as another state," Aronsen said. "But the counterculture was seen as a universal, progressive worldview, and it didn't matter if you were American, as long as you 'did' sex, drugs and rock n' roll. We welcomed the culture without critical interpretation."

And, in welcoming the culture, Aronsen says many Vancouverites set aside suspicions of the U.S.'s territorial ambitions and the downtown Kitsilano neighbourhood became a home and a symbol of hope, not only for Vancouverites, but also for the few thousand Canadians who moved there. They

"By the summer of 1967 [Kitsilano] had established its counterculture reputation, and hundreds of 'outsiders' visited West Fourth Avenue just to 'drive up and down to see the hippies.' Vancouver became a city of love and revolution."

Lawrence Aronsen

came to help create a better world by rejecting capitalism and the emerging consumerist middle-class society it was producing, Aronsen said.

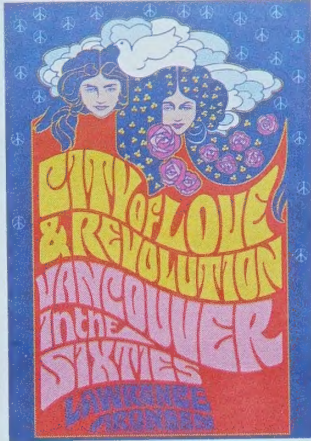
"In 1966, teenage boomers from all backgrounds began hanging out in the hip neighbourhood of Kitsilano. By the summer of 1967 the area had established its counterculture reputation, and hundreds of 'outsiders' visited West Fourth Avenue just to 'drive up and down to see the hippies,'" Aronsen noted. "Vancouver became a city of love and revolution."

But unlike the U.S. where the cultural, political and social changes activists sought were met with resistance from government, Aronsen says it was different in Vancouver.

He explains that mass immigration in the later 19th century had prepared the city for the newer cultural import.

"In the late 19th century, mostly from French and English mass immigration, Canada established several identities and cultures," said Aronsen. "So when the '60s came, because the country had this tradition of recognizing different identities, Canadians didn't beat down the counterculture as they did in the U.S."

The counterculture decade, which for Aronsen's book spans November 1963 to April 1975, did not pass completely without violence in Vancouver, however. "The Gastown Riot on Aug. 7, 1971, when Vancouver



Lawrence Aronsen in Vancouver.

police ran amok using the pretext of an earlier, non-violent 'smoke-in' at Maple Tree Square, was the closest Vancouver came to the violent confrontations that marked the era in the U.S.," he says.

Aronsen says that during that time, Vancouverites who embraced the decade of sex, drugs, music, social and political activism, and theatre, impacted national politics on issues such as abortion, the environment and matters concerning First Nations peoples in Canada.

"The women's and environmental movements are the two most powerful political movements that came out of the 1960s," said Aronsen. "There has been improvement in race relations also. It's hard to measure these things

but the '60s accelerated the process of change."

His only criticism of the decade is that it expected too much from humankind. "The bar was raised too high as to how people should behave. It was a kind of romantic enlightenment view that somehow under the right conditions humans can behave like angels," said Aronsen. "The belief was that all violence could be eliminated in human behaviour if we remove people from materialist consumption, and somehow that would introduce a new level of authenticity in human relations."

"As the decades unfolded it has become clear that human beings can't behave by that ideal." ■

Hanging your hat in a new home for a cause

Michael Brown

If you ever find yourself trekking through the northeast corner of Nepal and you can't shake the feeling that the fellow working in the field ahead is wearing your favourite local little-league team's hat, he probably is.

How your ball cap miraculously made it halfway around the world to one of Asia's most poverty-stricken areas began four years ago with an idea from Wanda Vivequin, communications manager in the Faculty of Science—deliver 10,000 hats to the Himalayan town of Humla, Nepal, to help combat an epidemic of cataracts.

On March 24, the journey of 10,000 baseball hats from Edmonton to Nepal will be featured in a documentary being premiered at the Royal Alberta Museum called *The Forgotten Himalaya*.

Vivequin, who has led tours in and around Nepal for more than a decade, was guiding a trek through the Himalaya's in 2007 when talk with her group turned to how locals might protect their eyes from the sun while they spend their days working outside.

"It was determined that sunglasses aren't really the answer, but a cap would be pretty easy," said Vivequin. "I kind of stored that in the back of my head, and in early 2008 I decided to try collecting some hats before I went back over in May of that year."

Once home, Vivequin began sending emails to those closest to her, wondering if she could have their old hats. Her quest passed the point of no return when a friend at the CBC asked if Vivequin was interested in airing her story on "Sounds Like Canada" with Shelagh Rogers.

As luck would have it, documentary film maker Toby Molins, who coincidentally had just suffered an eye injury while skiing, heard the interview and signed up for the journey of 10,000 hats.

Vivequin was filmed doing everything from going to homes, schools and businesses in her quest for hats, as well as working through the transportation logistics of such an unusual shipment.

"I would be working the phones and there would be a box of hats put on my doorstep. Moms would empty out hat collections that piled up in their basements. One farmer gave me 500 hats. ATCO, who sponsored a yak to help carry the caps, also donated a bunch. It was insane, it really was," she said. "I had an entire history of Canada in hats in my living room. If there was a commemorative



Residents of Humla, Nepal, sport ball caps from Edmonton.

event and they produced a hat, I had it."

Beyond the hats, Vivequin says the project was ultimately about raising awareness of the damaging effects of the sun. She said cataracts are attributed to exposure to sun, poor diet and genetics, and that protecting your eyes from the sun is a good idea.

"I remember we held a clinic at the [local] hospital where we announced over the radio we were giving away free hats as well as putting on a clinic at the local hospital on eye protection," said Vivequin of the delivery. "Two thousand people turned up at the hospital to get a hat."

"When we started coming back down into the valley after our trek, we started bumping into people with Ottawa Senators hats or a Kulak Farms Wetaskiwin hat; it was surreal."

All proceeds from the film, which is narrated by Rogers, will go towards funding a cataract surgery camp in Humla in 2011. U of A alumnus Larry Louie of Louie Eye care in Edmonton is the event's sponsor.

"When people think of Nepal, they think of Everest, but this is an area of the country that isn't regularly featured, and they are desperately poor," said Vivequin. "The film is a nice way for people to see a different part of Nepal, and how ordinary people can put a little bit of effort in and help out."

The show begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 at the door. ■

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Deadline for applications is March 18, 2011.

Transplant recipients at risk for skin cancer

Quinn Phillips

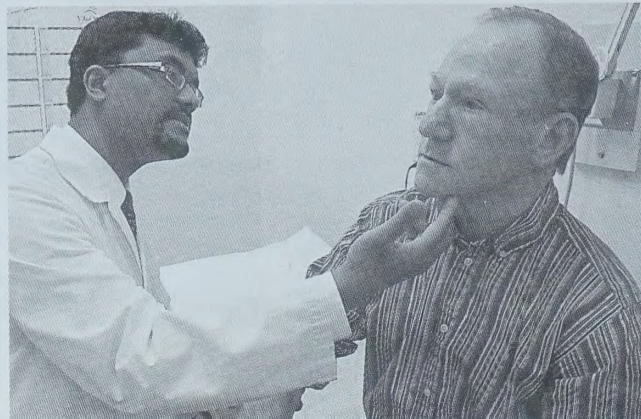
Muba Taher, professor in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry at the University of Alberta, is doing what he can to protect organ-transplant patients from a particular vulnerability: skin cancer.

In fact, patients who have received solid organs—rather than tissue transplants—are 65 times more likely to develop squamous cell carcinoma. According to the AT-RISC Alliance (After Transplantation-Reduce Incidence of Skin Cancer), they are 10 times more likely to develop basal cell carcinoma and are at three times the risk for melanoma, a deadly form of skin cancer.

To combat this frightening trend, Taher has started a new clinic at the U of A dermatology centre, with a focus on early screening and treatment for those at risk, often because of the suppression of their immune systems.

"We know that these patients are at increased risk for skin cancer; they grow more aggressive cancers faster," said Taher. "I'm hoping to provide an outlet where they can be screened and rapidly treated."

Seven to nine per cent of skin cancers in transplant recipients will spread, and once it has, less than half of transplant recipients survive over two years.



Muba Taher poses with long-time patient Dennis Greacen, who has received a number of islet transplants to treat his diabetes, and has since had two types of skin cancer.

The clinic started in January and the patient load is slowly increasing as Taher gets the word out to his colleagues in transplantation.

"They're very happy to know that there's a clinic that will focus on this issue," said Taher. "Transplant patients have many things going on in their lives, and my colleagues are busy keeping their organ function going, so I'm happy to play the part of looking after that other element."

The U of A couldn't be a better place to do this, considering it is a major transplantation centre performing an average of 256 transplants a year over the last five

years, according to U of A hospital transplant services.

"It's good access for the liver, the renal, the lung and cardiac transplant patients who are already familiar with the U of A hospital," said Taher.

In very severe cases, recipients who develop cancer will sometimes develop up to 100 skin cancers per year.

"I hope that one of the spinoffs from this clinic is public education," said Taher. "Just having the word out there that there is such a clinic hopefully reminds these patients that the skin cancer risk is something they should be aware of and there are resources to deal with these problems." ■

Researcher looks at hormonal influences on genius

Jamie Hanlon

A longstanding debate as to whether genius is a byproduct of good genes or good environment has an upstart challenger that may take the discussion in an entirely new direction. University of Alberta researcher Marty Mrazik says being bright may be due to an excess level of a natural hormone.

Mrazik, professor in the Faculty of Education's educational psychology department, and a colleague from Rider University in the U.S., have published a paper in *Roeper Review* linking giftedness (having an IQ score of 130 or higher) to prenatal exposure to higher levels of testosterone. Mrazik hypothesizes that, in the same way that physical and cognitive deficiencies can be developed in utero, so too could similar exposure to this naturally occurring chemical result in giftedness.

"There seems to be some evidence that excessive prenatal exposure to testosterone facilitates increased connections in the brain, especially in the right prefrontal cortex," said Mrazik. "That's why we see some intellectually gifted people with distinct personality characteristics that you don't see in the normal population."

Mrazik's notion came from observations made during clinical assessments of gifted individuals. He and his fellow researcher observed some specific traits among the subjects. This finding stimulated a conversation on the role of early development in setting the foundation for giftedness.

"It gave us some interesting ideas that there could be more to this notion of genius being predetermined from a biological perspective than maybe people gave it credit for," said Mrazik. "It seemed that the bulk of evidence from new technologies (such as Func-

tional MRI scans) tell us that there's a little bit more going on than a genetic versus environmental interaction."

Based on their observations, the researchers made the hypothesis that this hormonal "glitch" in the in-utero neurobiological development means that gifted children are born with an affinity for certain areas such as the arts, math or science. Mrazik cautions that more research is needed to determine what exact processes may cause the development of the gifted brain.

He notes that more is known about what derails the brain's normal development, but what makes gifted people gifted is very much a new frontier. "It's really hard to say what does put the brain in a pathway where it's going to be much more precocious," he said. "The next steps in this research lay in finding out what exact stimuli causes this atypical brain development." ■

Prof provides voice for women in Pakistan

Andrea Dobbe

Each year, half a million women in developing countries die from complications in pregnancy and childbirth. Each day, 1,600 women—equivalent to four plane loads of passengers—die needlessly.

"Imagine the indignation of the public if four plane loads of people died every day," says Zubia Mumtaz, professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Alberta. "But because these young women die quietly, unmourned and unacknowledged, in remote corners of the world, their deaths go unnoticed."

Mumtaz, who grew up in Kenya and spent 15 years working in Pakistan, is researching the root causes of these

deaths and how they can be reduced.

Over half of these deaths take place in just six countries, and Pakistan is one of them, Mumtaz says, adding that most of these deaths are avoidable.

Her research shows that maternal deaths in Pakistan are not random, but the result of systemic social, political and economic inequities. "An unequal gender order interacts with a hierarchical and unequal class order. This disadvantages the very poor women," she explains. "It is these women in Pakistan who are the most likely to die during childbirth."

Through her research, and time spent living in Pakistan, Mumtaz has discovered that gender and class directly impact a woman's ability to access health services. It is, she says, a very complex relationship.

These inequities are systemic and are woven into the way maternal health policies are developed and the health-care system designed.

"The health-care system in Pakistan is designed to serve the rich. Poor women have very limited access to maternal health care," says Mumtaz.

Recently, the government of Pakistan created the Community Midwifery program. This program trains midwives to provide maternity services to women in remote rural villages, but because community midwives practice in the private sector, Mumtaz questions whether they are providing care to the very poor women who by definition are unable to pay.

"I am exploring whether very poor or socially marginalized women can access these midwifery services." ■

Genomics ethicist says field needs to move forward carefully

Sandra Pysklywyc

Researchers have been working with the map of the human genome for the past 10 years. In that time, expectations around the promise of genetics research for improving health have continued to be quite high among scientists, policy makers, health-care professionals and even the public.

An article published Feb. 18 in the genomics section of the journal *Science* will more than likely raise a few eyebrows in the research world. The article, "Deflating the Genomic Bubble," is the collaborative effort of a research team comprising a geneticist, an ethicist, a social scientist and a health-law and policy expert, cautioning against the dangers of inflated expectations.

The University of Alberta's Timothy Caulfield, who co-wrote the article with James Evans from the University of North Carolina; Eric Meslin of Indiana University; and Theresa Marteau of Kings College, say genomic research needs to unfold appropriately; otherwise it will damage the field. "While I think there is an emerging recognition in the science community about the challenges faced by genetics, you don't see many statements telling us all to calm down."

Genetic research has often been thought of as the "sexy science," Caulfield says, adding that, with all the attention in the media and the rush for commercial applications, there is a need for re-evaluating funding priorities and determining what is the best bang is for a research dollar.

"The inappropriate hype comes from a number of sources, including the increasing pressure on researchers to 'translate' and commercialize their work in order to justify funding, media representation and the desire to attract research funds."

And while the researchers are concerned about genomic research living up to its billing, they are quick to point out that the work done to date is "breathtaking," Caulfield says, "Genomic research has led to a universe of fascinating basic science discoveries. It has increased our understanding of human diseases and I think it will lead to more targeted and effective therapies. But we need to tone down the hype."

Much of the risk information associated with genetic linkages to common afflictions, like heart disease, is weak, the group's findings show. Caulfield suggests that people need to make behavioural changes rather than rely on genetic makeup or pre-disposition for their health risks. "Even in the face of powerful risk information, like the data we get from the weigh scale or blood-pressure cuff, we continue with our unhealthy habits. The existing data tells us that genetic risk information will not help us perform better."

"We do recognize the health benefits of genetics research, but it's going to take time to fully realize their value," says Caulfield. "In the meantime, we need to be realistic about expectations and perhaps look toward more research into the behavioural sciences." ■

Fish oil provides surprising benefits to lung-cancer patients

Michel Proulx

New research has revealed that daily doses of fish oil for lung cancer patients improve the efficiency of chemotherapy and help prevent muscle and weight loss that commonly occurs.

Vera Mazurak, a nutrition and metabolism expert in the Department of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science at the University of Alberta, led the study that examined various effects of fish oil, specifically the two fatty acids in fish oil, on lung-cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy.

Cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy often lose weight and muscle mass. According to the National Cancer Institute, 20 to 40 per cent of cancer patients die from malnutrition as opposed to the tumour. Researchers suspect that supplementing the diet with fish oil—which contains omega-3 fatty acids such as eicosapentaenoic acid—may help patients maintain or gain muscle.

"Fish oil may prevent loss of weight

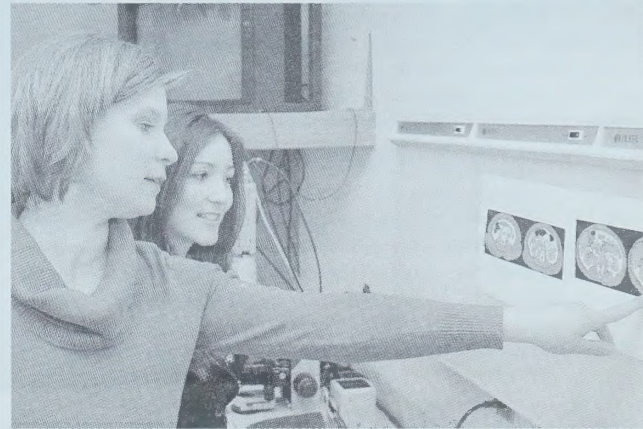
and muscle by interfering with some of the pathways that are altered in advanced cancer," said Mazurak. "This holds great promise because currently there is no effective treatment for cancer-related malnutrition."

Mazurak noted that fish oil is safe and non-toxic with virtually no side effects and may be beneficial to patients with other forms of cancer and other chronic diseases that are associated with malnutrition, as well as to elderly individuals who are at risk for muscle loss.

In the first part of the study, the researchers compared the effectiveness of the chemotherapy in shrinking tumours and the rate of survival after one year. In the group of 15 patients who received fish oil on a daily basis, 60 per cent saw a reduction in the size of their cancerous tumour, compared to 28.5 per cent who obtained the same result from the control group who did not receive fish oil.

In addition, 60 per cent of those who took fish oil survived beyond a year, compared to 39 per cent of those who didn't take it.

In the second component, the



Vera Mazurak (left) and PhD student Rachel Murphy found that chemotherapy was more effective for lung cancer patients when they took fish oil daily.

research team examined another group of lung-cancer patients, some of them overlapping with the first group, and looked at the effects of fish oil on weight, muscle and fat tissue.

This part of the trial involved 16 patients who took fish oil and 24 patients who did not.

The researchers found that 69 per cent of patients taking fish oil

maintained or gained muscle mass compared to 29 per cent from the group who didn't receive the fish oil. Patients who did not take fish oil lost an average of 2.3 kilograms, whereas patients receiving fish oil maintained their weight.

The research was recently published online in *Cancer*, a peer-reviewed journal of the American Cancer Society. ■

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news [shorts]

folio presents a sample of some of the research stories that recently appeared on ExpressNews, the U of A's online news source, and other campus news sources. To read more, go to www.expressnews.ualberta.ca.

Remembering geography department founder

The university community was saddened to hear of William C. Wonders' death Jan. 24. Wonders' association with the University of Alberta was long and rewarding, beginning in 1953, when as an assistant professor of geography in the Department of Political Economy, he established the first courses in geography. From 1957 until 1967 he was the founding head of the newly formed Department of Geography at the U of A.

Named member to the Order of Canada in 1999, Wonders was recognized often during his career and awarded numerous honours and awards, including as an elected fellow to the Royal Society of Canada. Wonders retired from the U of A in 1987 and over the course of his 35 years at the university he provided the academic leadership that developed a leading geography department and saw the foundation of important Northern-related institutes such as the CCI and CINS.

The U of A and affiliated research communities have lost a well-recognized leading Canadian geographer and friend. His impact to the science remains and will be long remembered.

Draper named coach of the year

In 13 seasons, inaugural University of Alberta Pandas head coach Howie Draper has amassed an impressive list of accomplishments, including seven CIS national championships, two silver medals, 11 Canada West titles and three CIS coach-of-the-year awards.

To that Draper can add the title of 2010–11 Canada West Coach of the Year, his sixth such selection. He was also named conference Coach of the Year in 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2009.

Couple's charity recognized through student award

Two new scholarships in the U of A's Alberta School of Business bear a name familiar to Alberta business and charitable organizations alike. On March 2 telecommunications giant Telus and the Alberta School of Business announced the Westbury Family Awards in Philanthropy.

"Drs. Bob and Marilyn Westbury have been champions to many charitable organizations across Canada and in Alberta, and so we are deeply honoured to be part of their legacy of giving back," said Mike Percy, dean of the Alberta School of Business. "Through the generous support of Telus, we are pleased to receive funding to establish the Westbury Family Awards."

The scholarships will be awarded annually, one to a third- or fourth-year business student who demonstrates community engagement, the other to an individual from the non-profit sector who undertakes an MBA or EMBA program.

Administrative task force struck

As a way of determining how to manage the operations of University of Alberta better and more efficiently, Phyllis Clark, vice-president (finance and administration) has struck the Administrative Innovation and Process Review Task Force.

The intent is to bring innovative thinking to the job to make it more satisfying. It is hoped people will bring creativity to reviewing what may be seen as bureaucracy.

One of the goals is to find savings through increased efficiencies, implementing best practices, shared services, and so on. While it may not be possible in every situation, the first response will be to see savings returned to the department or business unit. Centrally funded savings will be redeployed as appropriate as determined either by the responsible vice-president or Executive Planning Committee.

Prior administrative task forces on campus have resulted in millions of dollars in savings and revenue enhancement. Ideas implemented include timely deposits, parking fee increases, preferred supplier contracts and customization of PeopleSoft packages, to name a few.

With a make-up of people from across the university, the task force is looking to all members of the university community for ideas on how to make the administrative operations of the university more effective and efficient.

The task force is consulting with the university community and encourages anyone who has an idea to contribute their ideas by April 29 at ideas@ualberta.ca.

The terms of reference, a Q-and-A, a prior listing of administrative efficiencies, along with the task force membership list, can also be found on the website at www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/vpfinance/taskforce.cfm.

Panda wrestlers win first ever CIS championship

The University of Alberta Pandas wrestling team claimed their first ever CIS championship Feb. 26 at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ont.

The Pandas put together 47 team points on the strength of silver medals won by Sabrina Kelly (67 kg) and Marlen Figueroa (59 kg), as well as bronze medal performances from Hayley Thomas (48 kg) and Molly Bouchard (72 kg). Ranked No.2 coming into the championship meet, Alberta was able to hold off the top-ranked Calgary Dinos for the team title.

At the awards banquet following the competition, sophomore U of A coach Owen Dawkins was named the CIS female wrestling coach of the year. "After a long year of hard work our pandas wrestling team have accomplished what seemed to be the impossible," noted Dawkins. "This young squad of hard working women has shown to everyone that they will be a team to be reckoned for years to come." ■

Engineers Without Borders chapter wins big

Meghan Sylvester

Engineers Without Borders Canada recently held the nation's largest International Development Conference, and the University of Alberta's chapter returned home with the prestigious Greatest Dedication to Learning Award.

"It was really exciting," said Sierra Jensen, the vice-president of member learning, who was at the conference and had the honour of accepting the award. "I didn't know we had applied for that particular award and when they were talking about why a specific chapter wins, I thought it sounded a lot like us."

With 36 student and professional chapters across Canada and only half a dozen awards handed out, there's some stiff competition for each prize. The Greatest Dedication to Learning Award was granted to the U of A chapter in part because of its comprehensive member learning strategy, its school outreach program and its work on global engineering issues.

"We put a strong focus on member learning activities," said Jensen, a fifth-year electrical engineering student. "We put on workshops, watch films and have panel discussions to try to broaden our knowledge of international development issues."

Whitecourt youth clinic just what the doctor ordered

Quinn Phillips

It's clear that medical students at the University of Alberta understand the need for more youth-centred health-care services in rural areas.

Samantha Stasiuk and Cameron Sklar, both third-year students in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, have started a new youth clinic in Whitecourt with the aim of serving patients between 13 and 25. This is a much-needed initiative, identified by the students as part of their curriculum, because in small towns it can be difficult for youth to go to the local hospital for confidential medical advice because of a lack of anonymity.

"We thought it was really important to foster an environment where teens could come to the clinic without seeing their neighbour or their mom's best friend—a safe place to seek health care, with extended hours," said Stasiuk.

The clinic runs Tuesdays between 4–7 p.m., the perfect time for students to get there after school. With the help of their preceptor, Tahmeena Ali, Stasiuk and Sklar have been treating about five patients a shift. This has moved up from three a week, and they say they've been tracking how youth have heard about the clinic, all through word-of-mouth.

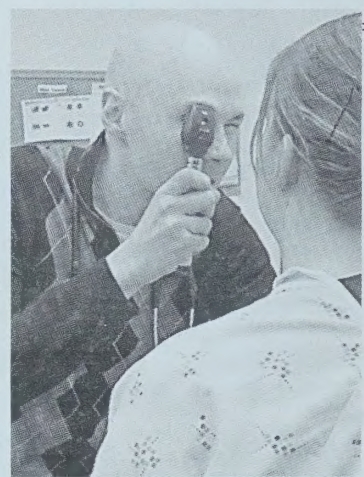
"When you consider teaching time and the complexity of the cases that we're seeing, we're fairly happy with the patient numbers," said Stasiuk. "We've been hearing only positive things from the community so far."

The hope is to make youth feel comfortable accessing health care, with the ultimate goal of young people reaching out for preventative health care instead of waiting until things become dire.

"Sam and Cam are younger, so hopefully the similarity in age makes them more approachable, especially on topics on the forefront for youth: contraception, unplanned pregnancy and STI (sexually transmitted infection) screening," said Ali.

Stasiuk and Sklar are in Whitecourt as part of the Rural Integrated Community Clerkship, which sees third-year medical students placed in rural communities. This initiative was set up to help promote practicing medicine in underserved rural communities.

"It's a completely different way of learning in a clerkship; they're in the communities for nine months learning all the core disciplines of medicine in an integrated fashion and getting to know their patients and their com-



Cameron Sklar in the Whitecourt youth clinic

munities," said Jill Konkin, associate dean of community engagement for the faculty. "This project speaks to how Cam and Sam have been able to look at a community and identify a need and do something to try and fill it."

Stasiuk and Sklar are in Whitecourt until May. At that point, Stasiuk says, the clinic will be re-evaluated and may be carried on by next year's medical students. ■

- with files from Erika Sherb (Alberta Health Services)

classified ads

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New rural teaching program offers two degrees in five years

Christopher Thrall

For more than 100 years, the majority of the University of Alberta's Augustana Campus students have come from communities outside of Edmonton and Calgary, many of them looking to teach.

It makes good sense, then, that an initiative designed to help staff rural schools would start here. Beginning in September, Augustana students can en-

rol in a combined degree program that will earn a bachelor of science degree and a bachelor of education degree with a major in the sciences in five years and turn out high-school teachers ideally prepared to serve in rural communities.

"The combined degrees open an important connection to Education on our campus," says Augustana Dean Roger Epp. "We know that there is a strong interest in education among our students—as well as potential stu-

dents—and that there is a strong need for science and math teachers in the rural communities from which many of them come."

Fern Snart, dean of the Faculty of Education, says that the opportunity will provide "new teachers who are ready to respond within a curriculum area that is in high demand in our province and beyond."

Students in the secondary-education route must choose major and minor

teaching subjects that prepare them for school instruction. However, unlike other combined education programs, this new program permits students to have a major on the science side and a minor on either the arts or science side. Students will be able to select their major from six science categories including biology, general sciences or mathematics and physics, but they can minor in any of 16 subject areas—chemistry to music, English language arts to social studies. ■

talks & events

Talks & Events listings do not accept submissions via fax, mail, e-mail or phone. Please enter events you'd like to appear in folio and on ExpressNews at: www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/events/submit.cfm. A more comprehensive list of events is available online at www.events.ualberta.ca. Deadline: noon one week prior to publication. Entries will be edited for style and length.

Until March 26

Murmurs: Hope Wells. This exhibition is the final visual presentation for the degree of master of fine arts in painting. Opening reception, Thursday, March 10, 2011, 7–10 p.m. Fine Arts Building Gallery.

Until March 28

Climate Trail – The Pathfinder Towards Global Solutions Display. Moving between Cameron Library (March 14–20) and Enterprise Square (March 21–28), this exhibit explains the causes of global warming, as well as its impacts on our planet. It describes how we can reduce carbon dioxide emissions and how Switzerland is addressing climate change.

Until June 24

The Last Best West: Glimpses of the Prairie Provinces from the Golden Age of Postcards. This exhibition of postcards is from the settlement and urbanization of the Canadian Northwest. The Peel's Prairie Provinces postcard collection contains thousands of fascinating and informative images, including personalized views of first houses, farms and family groups, as well as important events, disasters and buildings. Admission is free. Exhibition catalogues are available for \$25. Noon–4:30 p.m. Lower level, South Rutherford Library.

March 14

The Department of Cell Biology Guest Speaker. Julie Brill, professor of molecular genetics at the University of Toronto, will be on hand to give a talk. 9:30–10:30 a.m. 628 Medical Sciences.

Occupation 101. A thought-provoking documentary film on the current and historical root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, shown as part of Israeli Apartheid Week 2011. Noon–2 p.m., 135 Education Centre, North & South.

Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health. The IAPH fosters the advancement of a national health research agenda to improve and promote the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada, through research, knowledge translation and capacity building. Please join us to hear from three CIHR Institute scientific directors who will share where their institutes are headed. 2–3 p.m. 1-040 Li Ka Shing Centre for Health Research

Innovation. Register at <http://rsoregistration.ualberta.ca/CourseDescription.do?courseid=4922>.

Department of Economics Macro Seminar. Florian Hoffman, law professor at the University of British Columbia, will be on hand to deliver the seminar, "An empirical model of life-cycle earnings and mobility dynamics." 3:30 p.m. 8-22 Tory Building.

IAW 2011 Keynote: International Solidarity and the Palestinian Freedom Struggle. Huwaida Arraf, co-founder of the International Solidarity Movement, will deliver keynote lecture of 2011 Israeli Apartheid Week. 7–9 p.m. 150 TELUS Centre.

National Film Board Presentation (in French). "Antoine Maillet: les possibles sont infinis." Ce film unique propose une rencontre avec cette écrivaine acadienne devenue célèbre grâce au succès de son personnage de La Sagouine, puis portée au sommet de la gloire avec l'obtention du prix Goncourt, en 1979. 7 p.m. Pavillon McMahon.

March 15

"SEE the research at work" seminar series presents: "Building sustainable forest soils following oilsands mining." Sylvie Quideau, professor in the Department of Renewable Resources, will be talking about how entire landscapes are reconstructed and soil-like profiles are built using salvaged soil materials and mining by-products after mining. Noon–1:30 p.m. 5-40. Alberta School of Business.

Alexander von Humboldt information session. The presentation will outline some of the unique funding opportunities and there will be Humboldt scholars in attendance to share their own experiences. 3–4:30 p.m. 1-65 Education Centre, North & South.

Queerness and Occupation: What's the Connection? This informal workshop features Robert Nichols, professor in the Department of Political Science. 6–8 p.m. 165 Education Centre, North & South.

Poets Against Apartheid—A Night of Rouge Poetry. This night will leave you inspired to share the stories of struggle with others and to be part of the growing movement against the injustice of apartheid in Palestine. 9–11 p.m. Aberhart Centre.

March 15 & 17

Child Study Centre – Jr. Kindergarten (March 15) and K-6 Garneau Open House (March 17). Applications for the Garneau School will be accepted during the evening. If you are considering submitting an application, please bring a copy of your child's birth certificate. 6:30–8 p.m.

March 16

"The Economics of Happiness." This documentary is about the world-wide movement for localization. The film will be followed by a Q-and-A session with filmmaker Helena Norberg-Hodge. 7 p.m. 1 430 Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science (phase 2).

The Season of Revolt: New Arab Uprisings and Implications for Apartheid. What do recent developments in the Middle East and North Africa mean for Israel and for Palestinians? 7–9 p.m. 236/238 TELUS Centre.

March 17

The Apartheid of Displacement: Voices from the Palestinian Diaspora. Since 1948, Palestinians have become one of the largest refugee populations in the world. Come listen to the stories of Palestinian refugees who now reside in Edmonton, as they share their experiences of fleeing their homes and living in exile. 7–9 p.m. 1-5 Alberta School of Business.

March 18

On Respecting Persons in End-of-Life Care. Noon–12:45 p.m. Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre, University of Alberta Hospital.

Academic Freedom and the Palestinian Solidarity Movement: Making the Connections. Academics who have been active in Palestine solidarity work will address efforts to suppress dissent on university campuses and the role and responsibility of academics and scholars in this regard. 1–3 p.m. 165 Education Centre, North & South.

March 20–26

Earth Hour 2011. On March 26, 2011 at 8:30 p.m. local time the lights will go out. Each year for one hour citizens and businesses across the world are invited to turn out their lights and power down

electronics and appliances to acknowledge climate change and the impacts it has on our planet and our people. This year, the University of Alberta Office of Sustainability and WWF Canada will celebrate with multiple exciting events in the days leading up to and surrounding Earth Hour. Details posted on the Office of Sustainability website as they become available. sustainability.ualberta.ca

March 21–27

Vocal Arts Week. For more information go to www.music.ualberta.ca.

March 21

The Department of Cell Biology Guest Speaker. Leonard Neckers, urologic oncology researcher at the National Cancer Institute, will give a talk entitled "Targeting the molecular chaperone Hsp90 for cancer therapy: What does the biology tell us?" 9:30–10:30 a.m. 628 Medical Sciences.

2011 RU Lemieux Lecture. Brett Finlay, professor in biochemistry and molecular biology and microbiology and immunology at the University of British Columbia, is this year's Lemieux Lecturer. 4 p.m. E1 001 Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex (ETLC).

Winspear 4 Choral Concert. 8 p.m.

March 22

Celebration of Research and Innovation. The U of A's third annual Celebration of Research & Innovation salutes our outstanding academic staff, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, undergraduate students and support staff. 3 p.m. Myer Horowitz Theatre Students'

Union Building.

Aboriginal Student and Employer Mixer. This is an opportunity for employers to recruit some of the 800 Aboriginal students who are studying in a variety of disciplines at the U of A. 4–6 p.m. Aboriginal Student Services Centre (2-400 SUB) Students' Union Building.

March 23

Department of Economics Micro Seminar. Marcel Boyer, professor at the Université de Montréal, will be delivering the talk "Alleviating co-ordination problems and regulatory constraints through financial risk management." 3:30 p.m. 8-22 Tory.

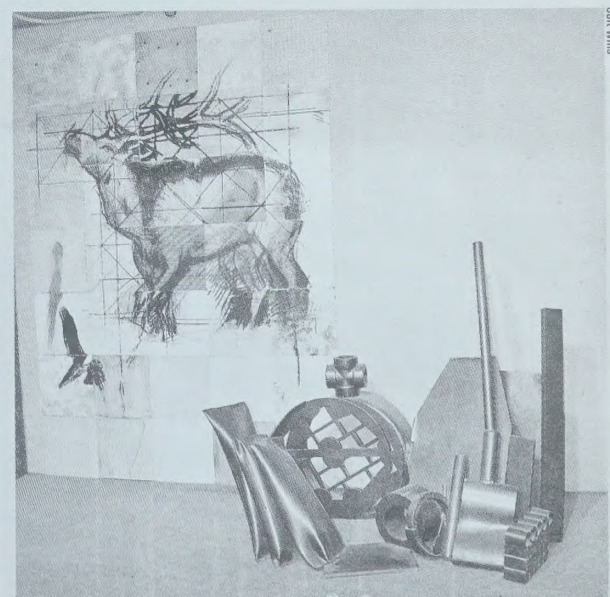
Educated Palate – Gourmet Tastings with d'Lish. With the assistance of several U of A alumni, we will tap into Edmonton's unique food scene. At d'Lish, an urban wine bar, taste a variety of wine and beer and pair with cheeses and chacterie meats. 6:30–9:30 p.m. 10418 124 Street. \$25 per person.

March 24

Picard Lecture in Health Law. "The Power, demands and limits of science: A cautionary tale for law and policy makers, health care professionals and the public," delivered by James Evans, clinical professor at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. RSVP hli@law.ualberta.ca, noon, 231/237 Law Centre.

Facing Uncertainty: Who is destined for Alzheimer's disease? Margaret Lock, professor of Department of Social Studies of Medicine at McGill University. 3:30–6 p.m. E1 003 ETLC.

Pedway gallery



Located at the entrance to the second floor of the Fine Arts Building on the pedway to HUB Mall, this display is one of many in the building that features the work of U of A fine-arts students.

laurels

U of A Industrial Design Alum Alex Cherniavsky was part of Robert Stromberg and Karen O'Hara-led team that won an art direction Oscar for their work in the movie Alice in Wonderland at the 2011 Academy Awards. Cherniavsky was part of the team that won in the category of art direction at the 2010 Academy Awards for the movie Avatar.

Gavin Oudit, cardiology professor in the Department of Medicine, has received the Distinguished Clinician Scientist Award from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, as well as the McDonald Scholarship and the 2010 Pfizer Cardiovascular Award.

Professors Patricia Boechler and Mike Carbonaro are the recipients of the Faculty of Education 2011 Technology Teaching Award. Their course "Ed It 486, Interactive Multimedia: Teaching and Learning with Video Games, A Constructivist Approach" was lauded as an outstanding exemplar of innovative pedagogical use of technology in the classroom. Their work serves to push teachers and learners to think carefully about how the learning process and cognitive skill development relate to each other. A presentation of the course will be showcased at the Technology Teaching and Research Fair on March 25.

THE LAST BEST WEST

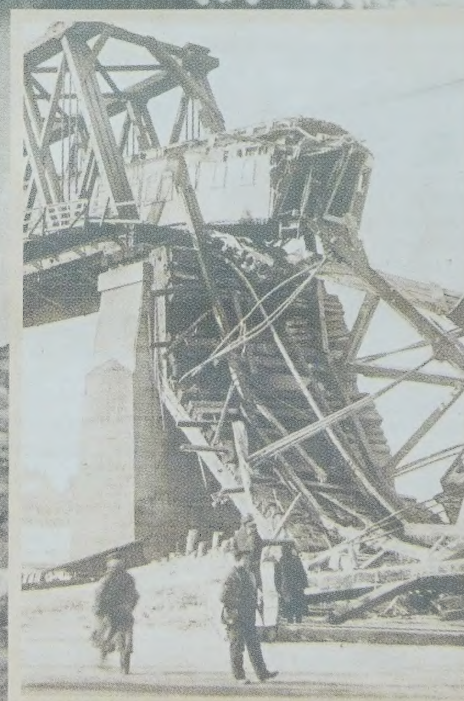


Glimpses of the Prairie provinces from the Golden Age of postcards

Bruce Peel Special Collections Library, Rutherford South
March 3 to June 24



An exhibition of postcards from the settlement and urbanization of the Canadian Northwest, the Peel's Prairie Provinces Postcard collection contains thousands of fascinating and informative images, including personalized views of the first houses, farms and family groups, as well as important events, disasters and buildings.



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Miette Hot Spring, Jasper National Park, Canada—J.N.P. 9.